The Builder.

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STEAMING across the country with architectural and archæological societies, and seeking to give our readers early information of all matters in which they may be supposed to take especial interest, and to discuss the current questions of the day, architectural, constructive, sanitarial, and artistic, as they arise, we have allowed our notices of forthcoming and published books to fall *en arrière*, and must endeavour to remedy the omission. Mr. Weale's advertised "Rudimentary Works for Beginners," embracing civil engineering, architecture, perspective, building, foundations, stone, law of contracts, &c., in tenpenny volumes, if properly done, will be a boon to a large class who are constantly applying to us to know where they can get the information they need, in a cheap form. The price is a low one, and will render a large sale necessary: but if the works are well done, the sale will doubtless be found. "It has been remarked," says the publisher, "that those who are in the ship of science ought to remember that the disciples cannot arrive without the aid of boats." Popular treatises are to science what boats are to large ships; they assist people in getting aboard; but as no one would trust himself to a weak or inefficient boat, so no one ought to begin the study of science with an imperfect guide. It sometimes happens that popular treatises are made to appear easy by the omission of those very details which are most essential to be known: they state results without going through the necessary processes by which those results are gained; they deal largely in facts, and leave principles untouched. Let those to whom the task of drawing up these treatises is confided bear these remarks in mind and act upon them.

A work on the "Rural and Village Architecture of Italy," by Mr. Charles Parker; a third edition of Downing's "Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage Villas;" and "Specimens of Ancient English Ecclesiastical Architecture," by J. Potter, are amongst the announcements.

The Architectural Publication Society is slowly filling its list of members, and preparing for action. Local secretaries have been appointed in many of the principal towns, who will collect subscriptions in their separate localities, distribute the works of the society, and receive and transmit suggestions to the committee. The desire is to enrol 500 names if possible before commencing publication; and there ought to be no difficulty in doing this, appealing, as the works will, to several large classes. It is by no means desired to confine the operations of the society to architects; we hope to find the builders numbering strongly in the list. And we would suggest to our readers who have not already subscribed their guinea, that they should not delay doing so till the society begins its operations, but join it at once,—not wait till the thing is done, but come forward *and help to do it*.

The committee will require to consider well their first step in publication, as by that they will probably be judged by many. The hope expressed by Mr. Cockerell in 1845,* that "The English architects, taking the dictionary of Quatremère de Quincy† as an example, would produce a perfect book upon the art, one man taking one part, and one another part; so as to render it of the highest authority, of extreme use, and of a character to reflect such dignity and glory on all concerned, that he was anxious to see it commenced;" and the remark of Sir William Chambers, in the preface to his treatise, that "One thing of very great use remains still to be done, at least in our language; which is, to collect into one volume what now is dispersed in a great many, and to select, from mountains of promiscuous materials, a series of sound precepts and good designs,"—are the texts which the committee adopt to work on. To the last, however, they will doubtless have to look first.

Foremost amongst the books now on our table, on account of both size and subject, is the first part of Mr. Clayton's "Illustrations of the Parochial Churches erected by Sir Christopher Wren in the metropolis,"‡ which, like the society just named, seems to owe something to Mr. Cockerell, who, the author remarks in his preface, has always pointed out from the chair of the Royal Academy, that the architectural delineation of Wren's minor churches was a *desideratum*, and further, has aided him by suggestions during the work and contributed measurements and drawings made under his own superintendence.

The work is of very large size; and the present part contains twenty plates, lithographed by the author, illustrating the church of St. Benet Fink, now destroyed; St. Antholin's, Watling-street; St. Stephen's, Walbrook, five plates; St. James's, Garlick-hill; St. Swithin's, Cannon-street; Christ Church, Newgate-street (with sufficient profiles of mouldings at large to stock a modern architect in compo); St. Peter's, Cornhill; St. Michael's, College-hill; St. Nicholas, Cole Abbey, Old Fish-street; and St. Mary's, Abchurch. They pretend to be nothing more than geometrical outline drawings of plans, sections, elevations, and details, and we are bound to confess are but coarsely lithographed, and lend no charm to the buildings they pourtray. It is, nevertheless, a very valuable work, and Mr. Clayton deserves great praise for entering with the energy and spirit here displayed, on so laborious and important an undertaking. Remembering, too, that his object has been to produce a comparatively cheap publication, and make it easy of reference, we are sorry to be obliged to qualify our praise even to the extent of the preceding remark.

The examples in the part before us, make evident Wren's skill in planning; his mastery of the science of vaulting; and the peculiar skill with which he produced spires for Italian architecture, opposed as this feature is to the principles of the style. The fertility of his invention, and the science he exhibited in effecting his purpose are alike beyond praise.

St. Stephen's, Walbrook, is very fully illustrated, and recalls to our mind with pain the still deplorable and disgraceful state of that edifice, which, for harmonious proportions, ingenious arrangement, and constructive skill, is truly admirable. The Corporation of London, and even the Legislature, ought to interfere, if the parish persist in shamefully neglecting their duties.

In respect of relative proportions, the drawings given by Mr. Clayton enable us to observe the curious care taken by Wren. Thus, in the church last named, St. Stephen's, Walbrook, the height to the crown of the cupola inside is exactly the width of the building between the walls. The height of the tower and steeple of St. Benet Fink, up to the cross surmounting it, was exactly five times the width of the tower. The height of the tower of St. Antholin's is four times its width, and, with the spire, exactly eight times: the internal height to the crown of the oval cupola in the same church is exactly the same as the greatest length between the columns which carry it. The height of the tower of St. James's, Garlick-hill, is four times its width, measured to the under side of the arch which terminates it internally, and exactly six times including the steeple,—and the minor divisions are regulated by the same unit. St. Swithin's Church is formed into an octagon, and the height to the crown of the cupola is the same as the width. St. Peter's, Cornhill, has the same width as height, and the length of the part inclosed for service is exactly one and a-half time its width. The height of the tower of St. Nicholas's, Cole Abbey, is four times its width, and with the steeple six times: the length of the body of the church inside is one and a-half time the width, and the height of it is half the length. It is, unnecessary, however, to pursue the inquiry further here.

The superior fitness of the Pointed style of architecture for ecclesiastical structures is so universally admitted in England at this time, that "The Works of Wren" will not serve as models for new *churches;* at all events, for the present generation. In designing other buildings, however, they will be found eminently suggestive; and this publication, therefore, has a value beyond that of being a mere record of the works of one of our greatest men,—the architect of the cathedral church of St. Paul. Truly, indeed, has it been said.—"A variety of knowledge proclaims the universality, a multitude of works the abundance, and St. Paul's the greatness, of Sir Christopher's genius."

Lithography has been used for another series of illustrations recently published, entitled "Outline Views of Beverley Minster," from drawings by Mr. John Johnson, Architect.* A splendid memorial of the skill of the mediæval architects is Beverley Minster, ranging, as it does, from Early English to Perpendicular,—of which latter period the west front is one of the finest examples in the kingdom. The Early English screen in the Lady Chapel, and the Percy shrine—a glorious piece of decorated work—are quite perfect in their way.

Mr. Johnson's work, of folio size, includes views of the west front, east front, Percy shrine, eastern transept, north porch, choir, the ladye chapel, the nave, the transept, and a general view. They are nicely drawn, but might have been better lithographed. There is no gradation of force: thus, for example, the lines of the great east window, in the view of the choir, are as black as those of the stalls in the foreground, so that the effect of distance is lost, and the whole becomes crowded and obscure.

The view of the transept and the view of the nave (both fairly executed) show a proposed

* Urged also in The Builder on more occasions than one.

† "Dictionnaire Historique d'Architecture, comprenant dans son plan les Notions historiques, descriptives, archæologiques, biographiques, théoriques, didactiques et pratiques, de cet Art." Paris, 8vo., 1832.

‡ "The works of Sir Christopher Wren. The Dimensions, Plans, Elevations, and Sections of the Parochial Churches of Sir Christopher Wren, erected in the Cities of London and Westminster." By John Clayton, Architect. Longman and Co.; or at the author's residence, 20, Elizabeth-street, Pimlico.

* Published at Messrs. Day's, 17, Gate-street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

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